

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 01839 181806Z

42

ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1334

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 01839

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PO, SP

SUBJ: SPANISH PREOCCUPATION WITH PORTUGUESE DEVELOPMENTS

REF: A) MADRID 1766; B) LISBON 1443 C. LISBON 1417

SUMMARY: MEDIA AND POLITICIANS CONTINUE TO EVIDENCE PRE-OCCUPATION WITH RECENT "LEFTWARD" TURN IN PORTUGUESE DEVELOPMENTS. PORTUGUESE EMBASSY HAS ISSUED REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL

POLICY STATEMENT AND ANOTHER DENYING THAT BANK AND INSURANCE COMPANY NATIONALIZATIONS ARE FIRST STEPS IN TOTAL NATIONALIZATION OF ECONOMY. SPINOLA QUOTED BY SPANISH AGENCY AS HAVING SAID "COMPLETELY FALSE THAT I SAID THAT I DID NOT THINK OF RETURNING TO PORTUGAL." SPANISH MEDIA REPORT NATO PREOCCUPATION WITH PORTUGUESE EVENTS LINKING IT TO STATEMENT BY LUNS THAT SPAIN HAS KEY STRATEGIC ROLE IN WESTERN DEFENSE. END SUMMARY

1. PORTUGUESE DEVELOPMENTS CONTINUE TO OCCUPY FRONT PAGE AND KEY INTEREST OF MEDIA AND POLITICIANS. WEEKEND PRESS REPORTS
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PAGE 02 MADRID 01839 181806Z

CIRCUMSTANCES AND DETAILS OF GENERAL SPINOLA'S FLIGHT VIA IBERIA

TO BRAZIL. ONLY STATEMENT MADE BY SPINOLA DURING ENTIRE FLIGHT WAS TO SAY "IT IS COMPLETELY FALSE THAT I SAID THAT I DID NOT THINK OF RETURNING TO PORTUGAL". MEDIA HEADLINED ACCOUNTS OF REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL DECISIONS TO NATIONALIZE BANKS AND INSURANCE COMPANIES.

2. PORTUGUESE EMBASSY SENT COPIES OF REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL POLICY STATEMENT ISSUED MARCH 14 TO SPANISH NEWSPAPERS, SOME OF WHICH PRINTED FULL TEXT (REF B). LOCAL PRESS ALSO PRINTED MARCH 18 PORTUGUESE EMBASSY STATEMENT DENYING THAT BANK AND INSURANCE NATIONALIZATIONS WERE FIRST STEPS IN COMPLETE NATIONALIZATION OF PORTUGUESE ECONOMY. (EMBASSY COMMENT: THESE ARE THIRD AND FOURTH STATEMENTS RELEASED BY PORTUGUESE EMBASSY IN PAST WEEK: PORTUGUESE ARE EVIDENTLY CONCERNED THAT SPANIARDS BE FULLY PROVIDED WITH OFFICIAL INTERPRETATION OF EVENTS NEXT DOOR.)

3. SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS REPORT ALLEGED ARRIVAL IN SPAIN OF CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC SENATOR SANCHEZ OSORIO. (AFOSI AT TORREJON AB INFORMED EMBASSY THAT SPANISH DGS HAS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT OSORIO HAD INDEED REACHED MADRID.)

4. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS AND REPORTS BY TRAVELERS, BORDER IS OPEN TO PORTUGUESE EMIGRANTS WITH VALID WORKING PAPERS IN SPAIN OR POINTS BEYOND (REF C). SPANIARDS HAVE NOT EXPERIENCED DIFFICULTY ENTERING OR RETURNING FROM PORTUGAL. SPANISH GOVT HAS ALSO FOUND IT NECESSARY TO DENY WILD RUMORS THAT "CAMPS" FOR REFUGEES ARE BEING SET UP IN BORDER AREAS.

5. LISBON-BASED CORRESPONDENT FOR "YA" (INDEPENDENT) AND "LA VANGUARDIA" (INDEPENDENT), ALBERTO MIGUEL, REPORTS THAT SPECIAL ENVOY OF SPANISH RADIO/TV, MANUEL ROGLAN, HAS BEEN FORCED BY "WORKERS COMMISSIONS" TO CEASE REPORTING AND ADVISED TO LEAVE COUNTRY. ACCORDING TO MIGUEL, RADIO CLUB PORTUGUESE ACCUSED SPANISH NATIONAL RADIO MARCH 17 OF MAKING FALSE REPORT ABOUT ALLEGED PRESENCE OF HUNDREDS OF PORTUGUESE AT LA PORTELA AIRPORT SEEKING TO FLEE THE COUNTRY.

6. SPANISH PRESS AND COMMENTATORS HAVE UNDERSCORED IMPORTANCE OF PORTUGUESE EVENTS IN MILITARY/STRATEGIC CONTEXT OF NATO AND CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 MADRID 01839 181806Z

GROWING IMPORTANCE OF SPANISH POSITION TO WESTERN DEFENSE AS REPORTED FROM NATO HQS IN BRUSSELS.

7. NEWS COMMENTARIES CONTINUE TO UNDERSCORE "LEFTWARD TURN" IN POLITICAL ORIENTATION OF PORTUGUESE ARMED FORCES. LEAD EDITORIAL IN "HOJA DE LUNES" MARCH 17 IS HEADLINED "MARXIST DICTATORSHIP IS STRENGTHENED IN PORTUGAL FOLLOWING LATEST EVENTS". EDITORIALIST, PEDRO GOMEZ APARICIO, ONE OF

SPAIN'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS NEWS COMMENTATORS, POINTS TO DIS-
APPEARANCE OF JUNTA OF NATIONAL SAVATION AND THE COUNCIL OF
STATE, WHICH CONTAINED MODERATE ELEMENTS, AS EVIDENCE OF
MARXIST RADICALIZATION OF ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT. HE
SPECULATES THAT ELECTIONS CAN ONLY LEAD TO CONSTITUTIVE
ASSEMBLY WHICH WILL BE NOTHING MORE THAN AN "INOPERATIVE
ORGAN ORDERED TO COPY ON TRACING PAPER A FUTURE CONSTITUTION".
MOREOVER, HE ADDED, NATIONALIZATION OF BANKS AND INSURANCE
COMPANIES ALREADY PROVIDE EXAMPLES OF CONSTITUTIONAL ACTS
WHICH PREFIGURE FUTURE POLITICAL CONSTITUTION. GOMEZ APARICIO
IDENTIFIES COPCON COMMANDER CARVALHO, ALLEGED ARCHITECT OF
APRIL 25 COUP, AS POSSIBLE STRONGMAN OF CURRENT REGIME.
EMBASSY CONTACTS, PARTICULARLY ON RIGHT, EXPRESS DEEP CONCERN
OVER TURN OF EVENTS IN PORTUGAL AND SEE SPAIN AS ULTIMATE
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE OF SOVIET PINCERS MOVEMENT IN WESTERN
EUROPE "AS IN 1936-39 CIVIL WAR."

8. COMMENT: SPANIARDS ARE INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ABOUT
TREND OF EVENTS IN PORTUGAL, FEARING THAT OPEN BORDER WILL
SOMEHOW EXPOSE THEM TO INFILTRATION OF UNDESIRABLE ELEMENTS
AND IDEAS WHICH COULD DISRUPT INTERNAL ORDER. ALTHOUGH COMMITTED
OFFICIALLY TO HANDS-OFF POLICY, GOS IS CONFRONTED WITH IN-
CREASING NUMBER OF SMALL IRRITANTS IN BILATERAL RELATIONS WHICH
MAKE PURSUIT OF THIS POLICY MORE DIFFICULT. ALTHOUGH SPINOLA
HAS LEFT SPAIN, OSORIO, AND PERHAPS OTHER POLITICAL REFUGEES,
ARE PROBABLY ALREADY AS EMBARRASSING TO SPANISH AUTHORITIES.

9. AGAINST BACKDROP OF CURRENT US/SPANISH NEGOTIATIONS,
DEVELOPMENTS IN PORTUGAL ARE BEING USED BY COMMENTATORS
TO UNDERScore INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF SPANISH CONTRIBUTION
TO WESTERN DEFENSE AND NEED FOR QUID EITHER IN NATO OR IN
BILATERAL CONTEXT WITH U.S. ON OTHER HAND, KNOWLEDGEABLE
SPANIARDS INCREASINGLY BELIEVE THAT SPAIN NEEDS U.S. SUPPORT
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PAGE 04 MADRID 01839 181806Z

NOW MORE THAN EVER AS BULWARK OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND
DOMESTIC ORDER.
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